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## NECROLOGY.

### BRUGSCH-PASHA. †

Henry Brugsch was born on the 12th of February, 1827, in Berlin. His father, a subaltern officer of the uhlans, who educated him in military discipline, sent him to the "Latin-school." At the age of twelve the boy was attracted by the Egyptian monuments of the royal collection (very insignificant at that time), and at the age of sixteen he published his first treatise on Egyptology, written in Latin (*De natura et indole lingue popularis*, etc.) This essay excited general interest because scholars had left the study of the demotic script of the ancient Egyptians almost untouched since Young and Champollion had made a few steps in its decipherment. Now a young student at the "gymnasium" had the courage to take it up. Alexander von Humboldt participated in the general interest, and that essay was printed at his expense. Humboldt continued to be the gracious patron of the talented but poor young scholar, and after Brugsch had left the university with the degree of doctor, he procured for him travelling scholarships which enabled him to visit all the museums of Egyptian antiquities, and, finally, Egypt itself, in 1853.

There Brugsch met Mariette, who had just opened the tombs of the apis-bulls. This period was mainly devoted to the same studies with which he had begun, and in 1855 he published, as a crowning work, his *Grammaire Démotique*. This book has been more admired than studied, because up to date demotic studies have, for good reasons, never been very popular. Brugsch seems to have felt this, for he began to turn his attention more and more to the hieroglyphic monuments. At that time, in Germany, certain men, such as Spohn, Seyffarth (who died in America some years ago) and Uhleman, had questioned the correctness of Champollion's system of deciphering, and, not giving a new system themselves, but disfiguring Champollion's results, they decried all his adherents and followers so successfully that, before 1860, Lepsius, almost the only German Champollionist, was at great disadvantage. Brugsch has done much to remove these perverting influences, beginning with his treatises (Latin and German, 1851), on the Rosetta stone. His second Egyptian

journey, in 1859, enabled him to do more in hieroglyphics. The *Monuments de l'Égypte* were the first fruit, but this work remained a fragment, like his *Histoire de l'Égypte*. Far more important were the *Géographie et Inscriptions* (1856-60), in which he took up quite a new kind of philological research.

In 1863 he had the extremely happy idea of founding a journal which should be devoted entirely to the promotion of Egyptological studies (the *Zeitschrift für ägyptische Sprache und Alterthumskunde*). The rapid progress of Egyptology is due especially to the existence of this organ, which, up to the present, has remained the centre especially of grammatical researches. It is characteristic that Brugsch, its bold founder, had to leave it in the hands of his rival, Lepsius, who, owing to his unusual resources, managed it successfully until 1884. After Lepsius' death it returned into the hands of Brugsch, who had given it up when he went to Cairo as Prussian consul. He remained only two years in this position. Of his different works from that time forward I will mention only his *Matériaux p. servir à la reconstruction du calendrier des anc. Égyptiens*, opening again a new field of research.

It was in 1867 that he had his greatest success, the professorship of Goettingen. This enabled him to begin his *magnum opus*, the *Hieroglyphic-Demotic Dictionary* (1868-82) in seven large volumes, all autographed by himself. But quiet Goettingen was not the place for him, and soon he took leave for five years to return to Egypt. The great boom of Ismail Pasha led to the establishment of an Egyptological school for young Egyptians, but this met the fate of most foundations of Ismail. Brugsch, who wrote for it one of his least scientific but most useful books, the *Hieroglyphic Grammar* (1870, French and German,) suffered financial and scientific disappointment. He mentioned to me some very elementary subjects in which he had to give instruction, instead of hieroglyphics. But he found time to write several works, among which his *Dictionnaire Géographique* (1879-89) holds the most important place. In 1876 he represented Egypt at the Centennial Exposition of Philadelphia, having done so before at Vienna. What he hoped for was the place of his best personal friend, A. Mariette, the director of the Egyptian excavations. But when Mariette died, in 1881, the promises given to Brugsch were not kept, and this desirable position was given to Maspero, as a countryman of Mariette. Maspero on leaving it secured this position for his students. Poor Brugsch returned to Germany. In 1884 he entertained the hope, after the death of Lepsius, of succeeding to his positions. But to the government Brugsch was not a *persona grata*, and he was disappointed in a most cruel manner. Twenty years

before (in 1860) he had done a great service to his government by taking the leadership of an embassy to Persia when it was threatened with shipwreck, and had led it most successfully. Now he was charged with a similar mission to Persia. When he returned he found both positions of Lepsius, the professorship and the directorship of the Berlin Museum, occupied. He retired to Charlottenburg, near Berlin, in possession of several fine titles (Pasha, Legationsrath, Professor), but in an unsatisfactory condition, especially financially, owing to his large family. I can testify that he felt very strongly the constraint which forced him to lecture and to write for the sake of money. He deserves our pardon for having written during this period some Egyptological books which betray that they are not written in a purely scientific interest (*e. g.*, his *Sieben Jahre der Hungersnoth*). For many years he had been a most unselfish writer, guided only by love of his science. His immense work, the *Thesaurus Inscriptionum* (1884–91), his work on the religion and mythology of the ancient Egyptians (1888), in which he again opened up a new field, his *Egyptology* (1889), very much dependent on Erman's *Aegypten*, are the better works of that last period. To give some relief to him the government sent him repeatedly to Egypt to study, to excavate and buy for the museum.

To give an impartial judgment of his scientific life, and to differ somewhat from the usual panegyrical style of necrologists, it must be confessed that he was undoubtedly lacking in strict philological method. I believe his earliest period must be made responsible for this. He began as a youthful prodigy, and from the journals of the period one can see how much the young doctor was admired and spoiled. This led him to neglect the philological drill in other disciplines which would have enabled him to systematize a young science. He confessed to me in 1885: "I never had any interest in philological hair-splitting; the only thing that gave me pleasure was reading and deciphering." This weakness is most painful in his Demotic Grammar, even more than in the Hieroglyphic Grammar and in his many philological essays. That lack of philological training explains also why such a gifted draughtsman, whose handwriting, both modern and hieroglyphic, was a marvel of beauty, published in his earlier period such wretched copies of inscriptions. Especially in his demotic facsimiles (and even in his *Thesaurus* of 1890) he would "correct" any word or sign unintelligible to him. Above all, I think he was weak as a historian, as is shown in his *History of Egypt* (1875, also in English). He never touched upon art and archæology. But his geniality and productivity were so enormous that he has furthered his science far more than any other scholar since Champollion. I

have enumerated only a fraction of his books, and none of his many essays. Everywhere he has worked as a pioneer, everywhere science owes so many thanks to him that his merits outweigh his blunders, however many and serious they are. His dictionary is a book which ought not to be put into the hand of a non-Egyptologist, but the specialist finds in its immense collections of material an invaluable treasure. It is easy to discover a goodly percentage of blunders on each page, to smile at his poor use of Coptic, at the unscientific comparisons with other languages (even the Aryan), but if Brugsch had not had such courage and stupendous energy in 1868 should we have such a dictionary at all, even now in 1894? The same can be said of many other works, although each one ought to be marked "to be used with caution." Some writings deserve much praise for their popularizing power. The most entertaining of them is his late autobiography. Brugsch might have been extremely useful as an academic teacher. Anyone who has felt the magic power of his personality will admit that no better man could be found to attract and to interest students and to fill them with that glowing love of his science which made him work up to the last moment. This unselfish zeal manifested itself in the sacrifices of time and work for every young student to whom he could be useful, even during the last years of complete hopelessness and of cares. As I have been among these, and owe him several debts of gratitude, I refrain from the unpleasant discussion why a man with such wonderful gifts, also in social respects, had such a sad life, full of failures. Some people ascribe it to his having assumed some Oriental ways of thinking and living. It was rather a strange unrest which also caused this most amiable, gentlemanlike person (the chaperon of a dozen princes because of these uncommon qualities) to begin several unprovoked literary quarrels with scholars of merit (*e. g.* with Chabas). Possibly future ages will blame Brugsch's contemporaries for not having overlooked these personal blemishes. So much is certain, for love of science and industry his name will always remain a shining example.

PHILADELPHIA.

W. MAX MÜLLER.